



NCDOT Rail Division

The Rail Report



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June 2019



IT'S THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FIRST TRANSCONTINENTAL RAILROAD!

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The iconic photo above was taken on May 10, 1869 by Andrew Russell. The Union Pacific's *Locomotive 119* and Central Pacific's locomotive *Jupiter* faced one another with UP's Chief Engineer Grenville Dodge shaking hands with CP's Chief Engineer Samuel Montague to mark the completion of the first transcontinental railroad connecting the west and east coasts of the United States. NCDOT celebrated this important anniversary through special rail travel promotions on May 10-11 and recreating this photo at the Capital Yard Maintenance Facility. (See photo on page 2.)



Recreation of the famous Andrew Russell photo with Chief Deputy Secretary David Howard shaking hands with Rail Division Director Jason Orthner. Deputy Director Allan Paul stands in the center surrounded by staff and RailPlan employees.

Historic Prices Offered May 10-11 to Celebrate the Completion of the Transcontinental Railroad

Just as the completion of the railroad in 1869 made a tremendous impact on the country, railroads today are critical components of the state’s transportation system. Passenger and freight rail play a central role in economic development and the expansion of business and industry across the state. With more than 70 percent of the state’s population within a 30-mile radius of a passenger station, nearly a million passengers boarded trains in North Carolina last year.

NCDOT offered a ticket special on May 10-11 to celebrate the 150th anniversary of Transcontinental Railroad completion and to encourage riders who have not tried train travel to get on board. It was also a way to thank our regular passengers for their many years of patronage. All trains were sold out for the weekend, with 5,141 riders taking advantage of the anniversary special.



June Trivia Question:
 Before the Transcontinental Railroad was completed on May 10, 1869, how did people travel cross country, how much did it cost and how long was the trip? *Answer on page 5*

Ridership & Revenue on NC By Train Service – Feb. 2019 vs. 2018						
	RIDERSHIP			REVENUE		
	2019	2018	% +/-	2019	2018	% +/-
Piedmont	15,075	10,701	41%	\$356,505	248,272	44%
Carolinian	15,814	15,972	-1%	\$1,008,047	\$953,785	6%

1,058
 Hours Volunteered by N.C. Train Hosts in February supporting NC By Train onboard and at events

In February 2019 two Piedmont trains were affected by service modifications. On Feb. 14, Train 77 terminated service at Cary due to equipment damage from a trespasser incident. Train 78 was cancelled. All other Piedmont and Carolinian trains operated as scheduled during the month. Average gasoline prices remained low in February 2019 and were \$0.39 per gallon lower than in February 2018.

Charlotte Gateway Station – Phase I Construction



Drilling piers, 6th Street



Trade Street end bent construction



5th Street piles being driven

Tell your friends and family about the **Blue Sign** at Railroad Crossings

*Remember, a train traveling 55 MPH can take a mile or more to stop. Knowing how to use the information on the **Blue Sign** at railroad crossings can save your life and the lives of others!*

**REPORT PROBLEM
OR EMERGENCY**

1-800-XXX-XXXX

XING# 123456A

Find the sign.

Call the number.

Give your location.

If there is an incident on or near a railroad crossing or a vehicle is stuck on the tracks, call the number on the blue sign on the crossing signal pole and report the problem to the railroad dispatcher along with the crossing ID number. Visit berailsafe.org to learn more about railroad safety.

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Short Line Improvement Program Grants for Awarded

The SFY 2019 Short Line Improvement Program (SIAP) had a second call for projects and was announced in March 2019. In April NCDOT received nine applicant projects that will provide \$8.92M in rail infrastructure improvements to North Carolina short line railroads. Per State statute, NCDOT will provide \$4.46M in matching funds. The projects are listed below.



Aberdeen Carolina & Western (ACWR)

Total Cost: \$187,000

The project will install a new major culvert in Montgomery County.



Aberdeen & Rockfish Railway (AR)

Total Cost: \$377,540

The project will replace crossties and rehab Fayetteville River Terminal tracks in Hoke and Moore counties.



Alexander Railroad Company (ARC)

Total Cost: \$774,200

The project will upgrade track, switches, yard tracks and at-grade crossings in Iredell County.



Atlantic & Western Railway (ATW)

Total Cost: \$1,000,000

The project will replace 6,400 track feet of rail, 2,000 cross ties and improve at-grade crossings in Lee County.



Carolina Coastal Railway (CLNA)

Total Cost: \$2,202,500

The project will replace 20,000 cross ties in Martin, Washington, Beaufort, Pitt, Greene, Wilson, Johnston, Nash and Wake counties.



North Carolina State Port Authority

Total Cost: \$3,235,847

The project will amend the 2018 SIAP scope to include improvements that will further enhance Queen City Express service at the Charlotte Inland Terminal in Mecklenburg County.



North Carolina & Virginia Railroad (NCVA)

Total Cost: \$1,000,000

The project will replace one and one-half miles of 100# rail with heavier 132# rail to accommodate heavy axle loads near the North Carolina/Virginia State Line.



Thermal Belt Railway (TBRY)

Total Cost: \$144,340

The project will replace crossties, rail and surface track in Rutherford County.



NCDOT is pleased to be a partner in transportation improvement projects that enhance the safety, reliability, and efficiency of rail operations, while supporting economic development across North Carolina. Since 2014, approximately \$33.94M in matching SIAP funds have been provided towards 75 rail improvement projects.

June Railroad Trivia Answer:

Before the railroad was completed most travelers crossed the country by wagon. The cost of the journey was nearly \$1,000 and took six months. Once the railroad was finished, the price dropped to \$150 and the trip took only a week.

Traveling by wagon was a slow and dangerous journey. Some chose to travel by sea, but that mode of travel also proved to be quite dangerous with many contracting yellow fever and other diseases.



NCDOT and Carolina Coastal Railway Improve Crossings in Pitt and Wilson Counties

Our featured crossings for this month come from Pitt and Wilson counties on the Carolina Coastal Railway.

The first crossing in Pitt County is Simpson Street in Simpson. In addition to the Carolina Coastal Railroad, NCDOT Division and Division 2 Pitt County Maintenance also assisted with this crossing improvement. Simpson Street consisted of a two-lane asphalt and rubber rail seal crossing. The asphalt was deteriorating, allowing the rail seal to also wear. New rail seal was installed along with a new asphalt in the crossing and the approaches to the crossing. This provides a much smoother drive.

The second crossing in Wilson County is Grimsley Store Road near Stantonsburg. Wilson County Maintenance in NCDOT's Fourth Division also assisted with improving this crossing.

The Grimsley Store Road crossing was a two lane timber and asphalt crossing. The crossing timbers were in poor condition causing traffic to slow and creating a rough crossing surface. The timbers were replaced with rubber rail seal and new asphalt, offering a much improved drive and allowing traffic to maintain a safe speed over the crossing.



Simpson Street before improvements



Grimsley Store Road before improvements



Simpson Street after improvements



Grimsley Store Road after improvements